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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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Virginia volunteers contribute more than \$4 billion worth of service

Deadline for Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Awards is Jan. 31

Richmond, Va. — Every region of the Commonwealth has them — special individuals and organizations who tirelessly volunteer to make their communities better. Nearly two million Virginians volunteered their time and talents last year. To recognize their significant contributions, nominations are now being accepted for the 2008 Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Awards. Awards will be presented in several categories, including youth, senior, faith-based organization, non-profit organization, emergency preparedness and disaster recovery, business, individual volunteer, national service and more.

Virginians average nearly 239 million volunteer hours annually, equaling more than \$4 billion of service to the state. "The awards program highlights the efforts of outstanding citizens of the Commonwealth who seek to enhance the lives of others in their communities. Nominations are open to businesses, groups, individuals and families whose volunteer and community service efforts exemplify extraordinary service," said Nikki Nicholau, director of the Virginia Department of Social Services' Office on Volunteerism and Community Service.

This year's winners will be honored during an awards ceremony in April at the Virginia [Conference on Volunteerism and Community Service](#) in Virginia Beach. For more information or to nominate a person or group, visit www.vaservice.org, call (804) 726-7065, 1-800-638-3839 or e-mail info@vaservice.org. The nomination period ends at 5 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 31.

Nomination forms can be submitted online or downloaded and mailed to the Virginia Department of Social Services, Office on Volunteerism and Community Service, 7 North 8th Street, Richmond, VA 23219.

The Virginia Department of Social Services administers social services programs, consistent with federal and state law and policy of the State Board of Social Services, through 120 local departments of social services throughout the state and its home office in Richmond. The VDSS mission is "People helping people triumph over poverty, abuse, and neglect to shape strong futures for themselves, their families and communities."

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Editor's note: Interviews are available upon request. For additional story ideas and information, contact Nikki Nicholau, at (804) 726-7644 or Melissa Perdue at (804) 726-7111.